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*AS WE ARE*

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# AS WE ARE

BY *VICTOR DE KUBINYI*

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*With a Preface by*

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM



MCMXXIX

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AS WE ARE

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*To the memory*  
*of my*  
PARENTS



## AS WE ARE

.....

*No one shall work for money,  
And no one shall work for fame,  
But each for the joy of working,  
And each in his separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees it,  
For the God of Things as they are.*

KIPLING



## PREFACE

.....

*When a Navaho is confronted with something he does not understand, his invariable question is haa-tishe! What is it? And it was haa-tishe that surged in me the first time I viewed M. de Kubinyi's pictures.*

*I had once been a student of the art of the insane, but this clearly was not of that category; nor was it primitiveness, the art of our ancestors, nor could it be wholly or even largely something willful, artificial. And certainly it was nothing conventional.*

*But if none of these, what then? Perhaps a set of mere artist's vagaries.*

*No, not that either. There is too much fundamental character and exotic beauty in all this. There is a high individuality, an odd talent. Yes, an odd, unwonted, interesting talent.*

*But what does it all mean?*

*If not wholly artificial, then it must be something psychological. A series of psychographs in form and colors. Not a series of thoughts, and plans, except, perhaps in a secondary measure, primarily translations in odd forms and odd colors of odd mental states. A series of more or less automatic expressions of an uncommon conscious but seemingly especially subconscious mental world.*

*Abnormal? Yes; but only as anything uncommon and unconventional is abnormal. It is abnormal, though perhaps more spontaneous and wholesome, as some of the recent ultra-impressionism, such, for instance, as some of that developed lately on the stage by Russians.*

*It is a mental phenomenon that deserves the earnest attention of the artist, the psychologist and the cultured thinker.*

*Washington, D. C., November 16, 1928.*

ALEŠ HRDLÍČKA.



# CONTENTS

.....

PREFACE, ix

FOREWORD, xv

I · *Imagination*

II · *God*

III · *Faith*

IV · *Inspiration*

V · *The Soul*

VI · *Gratitude*

VII · *Purity*

VIII · *Purpose*

IX · *Ambition*

X · *Determination*

XI · *Speed (Haste)*

- xii · *Confusion*  
xiii · *Joy*  
xiv · *Fear*  
xv · *Obedience*  
xvi · *Conceit*  
xvii · *Pride*  
xviii · *Guilt*  
xix · *Prayer*  
xx · *Intolerance*  
xxi · *Gossip*  
xxii · *Suspicion*  
xxiii · *Patience*  
xxiv · *Devotion*  
xxv · *Hypocrisy*  
xxvi · *Slander*  
xxvii · *War*  
xxviii · *Theft*  
xxix · *Death*  
xxx · *Jealousy*

- xxxI · *Hate*  
xxxII · *Greed*  
xxxIII · *Remorse*  
xxxIV · *Wisdom*  
xxxv · *Hope*  
xxxvi · *Jazz*  
xxxvII · *Harmony*  
xxxvIII · *Integrity*  
xxxix · *Birth*  
xl · *Anger*  
xli · *Love*  
xliI · *Peace*  
xliII · *Silence*  
xliV · *Sincerity*  
xlv · *Solitude*  
xlvI · *Injustice*  
xlvII · *Truth*  
xlvIII · *Success*  
xlix · *Versatility*

- L · *Gloom*  
LI · *Courage*  
LII · *Inhibition*  
LIII · *High Tension*  
LIV · *Aspiration*  
LV · *Extravagance*  
LVI · *Revelation*  
LVII · *Modesty*  
LVIII · *The Urge*  
LIX · *Garrulity*  
LX · *Perseverance*  
LXI · *Megalomania*  
LXII · *Compromise*  
LXIII · *Contentment*

## FOREWORD



*Are we not living in a civilized age? If we are, as we all seem agreed upon, is not civilization in the last analysis primarily a matter of good manners? And what are good manners? Brought down to a fine point they are simply the results of emotional self-control.*

*Of course, this civilization of ours is man made. Man has never ceased creating and conceiving and our human relationships are the result of a long and weary process of progress, but for that very reason they are so apparently and so obviously of man's making.*

*We are modern, too. Our engineering, music, sciences and the arts all bear more than ample witness to that. But the basic human quality remains the same, for some of us are still acting and behaving like the primeval tribesmen.*

*Life is a personal affair, not only fundamentally, but essentially also. But man being more than body, and more than a creature of his physiology, it is only natural, if for no other reason than pure selfishness, that all of us try to fit into the scheme of things.*

*This being so, an intelligent person will devise a plan for fitness. A plan that is more than a mere pattern: a plan that one has to live.*

*Does believing in something indicate intellectual inferiority? In order to have a rightful claim to being a highbrow or a sophisticate, must one question everything and wind up in believing nothing?*

*I have here no reference to theological creeds or beliefs. I have in mind a very human belief, that which tells us that we cannot succeed unless we make ourselves to fit into the existing scheme of things. This belief is based on fact: it is a fact that civilization has created conditions which compel us to live in a crowd. A large portion of our human family does actually and physically live in a crowd. But even in places where the population is sparse, the crowd instinct prevails and dominates. Mind, not the herd instinct, but the knowledge that we are living amidst so many*

*other human beings. And if we want to "fit" into things, which seems so indispensable to success and happiness of any sort, we simply have to adapt ourselves to conditions as they actually exist.*

*It is said that this particular age of ours is smudged with sex, and arrogancies, and that it is full of crude, blurting, inarticulate and inane self-assertion. Perhaps there is something to this. If so, there we have an added reason for adjustment.*

*It seems that life is becoming increasingly complex. Sometimes it almost looks like an ordered confusion. As a result we are apt to become oppressed and bewildered. Society in its aggregate, it would seem, is at present in its middle phase of raw, revolting youth. We do not seem to know what we want. We seem to have been spoiled by a rather sudden avalanche of what are called accomplishments and achievements. But this phase will pass and we shall emerge from it better and stronger and there will come a new humility, a more genuine frankness and a better understanding. The scramble will subside and we shall rise to a wiser serenity. We shall rediscover love, compassion and beauty and we shall build up a fine character that may be scarred and bruised but that cannot be broken. We shall regain our*

*real, honest faith in humanity and we shall leave to the next generation a world which, because of our efforts, has become a better place in which to live.*

*How?*

*Not by endeavoring to perform miracles;—nor yet by astonishing the world with our marvelous achievements, but simply by trying to fit into the scheme of things as they actually exist. Our machine-made civilization has forced us to live in a heterogeneous, crowded herd: and into this condition will we fit in proportion as we have mastered our emotions or not. In exact proportion, too.*

*Human nature has not changed essentially, and the human qualities and emotions have also remained the same: they are still fundamentally selfish, they do not reason, they know no logic. So then, it would seem quite a formidable task to control and to co-ordinate them. Not so if we look at the matter with ordinary common sense. We want to “fit.” And we have to, lest we make nuisances of ourselves. Would it, then, not seem the safest and the simplest way out if we curbed and oppressed our emotions?*

*This would be both wrong and dangerous.*



*It also is quite impossible, for there is no such thing as a completely hard boiled human person. We all carry some of our infantile emotions into adult life. That is only natural. And much nicer than a hard boiled world, which might be very efficient, but it would surely be a sad business to live in, for it would be utterly lacking in humor and color.*

*Emotions being the ruling force in every human life, they have to be correlated to the social order of things; in other words, they have to be kept under control. After all, our emotions and qualities are our tools. So why not put them to intelligent use, and why not let them work for us . . . instead of letting them work us?*

*Life is a constant game of give-and-take. A successful life is that which adjusts itself to this game. Emotional outbursts that have no other basis than the frustration of one's individual desires are not tolerated any longer.*

*But why try to co-ordinate and to control our emotions? Do they not inspire men to deeds of courage, heroism and genius? Indeed they do . . . but they also fill the prisons and insane asylums.*

*So here we have it clearly, that the human*

soul is comprised of constructive and destructive emotions and qualities. Or call them good and bad ones, if you prefer. Cultivate the constructive emotions and qualities and control the destructive ones. Do not repress the latter too sternly: co-ordinate them and try to control them, but do it gently and wisely, for too long and too sternly suppressed they are apt to cause most violent disturbances—and in very unexpected places—if once let loose.

There is no human being who does not have, in various degrees to be sure, all of the emotions only waiting to be aroused under sufficient stimulus. And here we have the whole secret. The secret of fitness to live in this age of ours: to find and to devise ways and means whereby we can shape and formulate our daily life with the least possible friction, which does not mean that we should completely suppress our emotions: it simply means that we must arrange our life and our activities so as not to stand in our own light.

This might require courage. It does require faith in one's self. In some cases it may require self-denial and sacrifice. In all cases and under all conditions and circumstances, however, all it

*really does require is some thought. And, surely,  
we are all able to think.*

*So why not look at ourselves and behold our-  
selves as we are?*

*Thought will then follow.*

*Action will be but a natural sequel.*

*The result, in each and every case, is bound  
to be less friction and increased happiness.*

VICTOR DE KUBINYI.

*New York, 1929.*



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*AS WE ARE*

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## I. IMAGINATION

*Yes, on the wings of fancy upward soars  
Imagination into unknown realms,  
Disclosing mysteries beyond our ken:  
Oft sending back a ray for true achievement—  
Yet, seldom can one take it quite at par.*

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II. *G O D*

*God is more truly imagined than expressed, and he exists more truly than he is imagined.*

ST. AUGUSTINE

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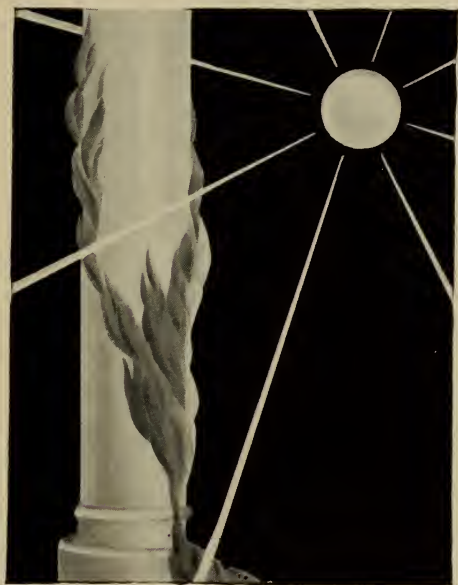
III. *FAITH*

*Relying on its strength  
In life's weird storm  
Faith stands alone  
'Midst fears and doubts and dangers:  
Its unselfish design—in spite of all—  
Commanding silent victory and peace.*

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#### IV. *INSPIRATION*

*We are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul:  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.*

WORDSWORTH

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v. *THE SOUL*

*Hands of invisible spirits touch the strings  
Of that mysterious instrument, the soul,  
And play the prelude of our fate.*

LONGFELLOW

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VI. *GRATITUDE*

*No metaphysician ever felt the deficiency of language so much as the grateful.*

C. C. COLTON

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VII. *PURITY*

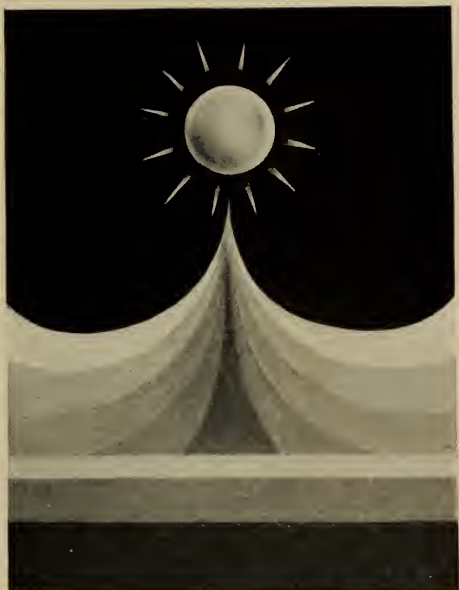
*Still to the lowly soul  
He doth himself impart,  
And for His cradle and His throne  
Chooseth the pure in heart.*

KEBLE

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VIII. *PURPOSE*

*Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;  
For what I will, I will, and there an end.*

SHAKESPEARE

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IX. *AMBITION*

*Those who write against glory desire to have the glory of having written well; and those who read wish for the glory of having read; and I myself, in writing this, have perhaps that yearning, and so also perhaps have those who read me.*

P A S C A L

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x. *DETERMINATION*

*But slightly counting on its ally, hope:  
Determination, pushing through,  
Will conquer ignorance and pain and fear:  
Reaching its goal in spite of handicaps.*

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XI. *S P E E D (Haste)*

*With grim determination  
—Misled by idle hope—  
Speed rushes on ahead in all directions:  
Pursuing madly goals it does not see,  
Making a sorry mess of peaceful life.*

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XII. *C O N F U S I O N*

*Chaos umpire sits,  
And by decision more embroils the fray  
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter  
Chance governs all.*

M I L T O N

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XIII. *J O Y*

*The flow'r of life,  
Indeed, its crowning glory  
Is Joy. Do cultivate it  
But take heed  
Lest it fly off  
Into Exuberance.*

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xiv. *F E A R*

*Fear is the ague, that forsakes  
And haunts by fits, those whom it takes.*

BUTLER

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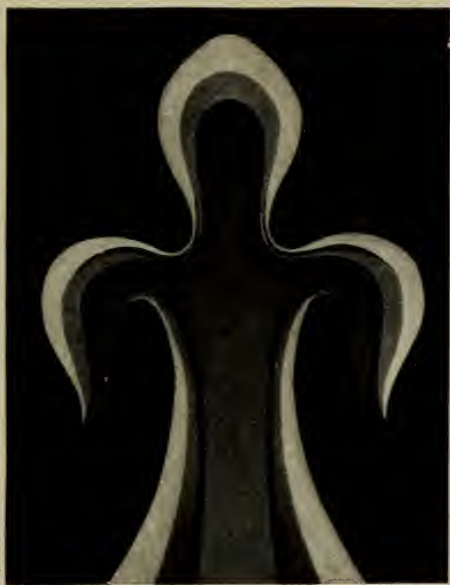
xv. O B E D I E N C E

*Though somewhat obsolete in "modern" thought,  
Perhaps obscure, and plain to look upon,  
Obedience still is the staff of life,  
Indeed, the fountainhead of all that's good,  
For it induces one to mind one's better self.*

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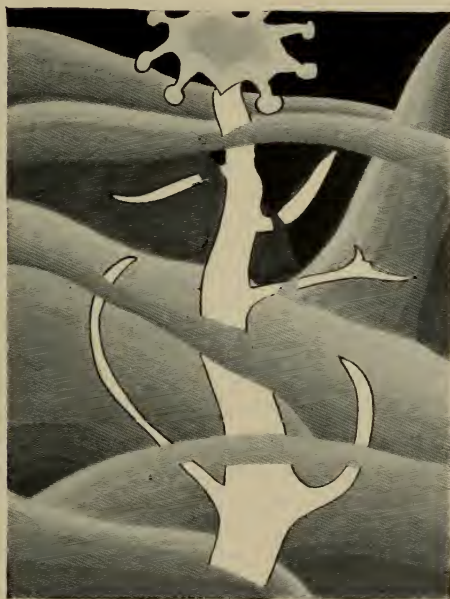
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xvi. *C O N C E I T*

*Gliding and pushing, like a snake,  
Its body sleek and most adventuresome,  
Conceit will rush through all the phases  
Of wasted life . . and bump its silly head  
Into sheer nothingness and miss, of course,  
The glory it so stupidly had sought.*

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xvii. *PRIDE*

*No mere mortal has a right  
To carry that exalted air;  
Best people are not angels quite.*

BROWNING

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xviii. *GUILT*

*To what gulfs  
A single deviation from the track  
Of human duties leads!*

BYRON

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XIX. *PRAYER*

*I'm heard when answered, soon or late,  
And heard when I no answer get;  
Yea, kindly answered when refused,  
And treated well when harshly used.*

R. ERSKINE

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xx. INTOLERANCE

*Where it is a duty to worship the  
sun it is pretty sure to be a crime to  
examine the laws of heat.*

LORD MORLEY

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XXI. GOSSIP

*How hard soe'er it be to bridle wit,  
Yet memory oft no less requires the bit.  
How many, hurried by its force away,  
For ever in the land of gossips stray.*

B. STILLINGFLEET

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XXII. *SUSPICION*

*All seems infected that the infected spy,  
And all looks yellow to a jaundiced eye.*

POPE

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XXIII. *PATIENCE*

*How poor are they that have not patience!  
What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?*

SHAKESPEARE

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xxiv. *DEVOTION*

*True as the dial to the sun,  
Although it be not shined upon.*

BUTLER

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xxv. *HYPOCRISY*

*There is as much folly in hypocrisy  
as in vice. It is just as easy to be an  
honourable man as to seem one.*

MME. DE STAËL

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XXVI. *S L A N D E R*

*Defaming and defacing, till she left  
Not even Launcelot brave, nor Galahad clean.*

T E N N Y S O N

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xxvii. *W A R*

*As long as war is regarded as wicked it will always have its fascinations. When it is looked upon as vulgar, it will cease to be popular.*

OSCAR WILDE

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XXVIII. *T H E F T*

*Why should I deprive my neighbour  
Of his goods against his will?  
Hands were made for honest labour,  
Not to plunder or to steal.*

I. WATTS

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XXIX. *DEATH*

*We are no other than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-Shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held  
In Midnight, by the Master of the Show.*

OMAR, RUBAIYAT

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xxx. *JEALOUSY*

*Love is strong as death; jealousy is  
as cruel as the grave.*

SONG OF SOLOMON

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XXXI. *H A T E*

*The ruling principle of Hate,  
Which for its pleasure doth create  
The things it may annihilate.*

BYRON

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xxxii. *G R E E D*

*Supine amidst our flowing store,  
We slept securely, and we dreamt of more.*

DRYDEN

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XXXIII. REMORSE

*High minds, of native pride and force,  
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!*

SCOTT

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xxxiv. *WISDOM*

*In mystic dignity and quiet, reposing  
Upon the solid ground of wondrous calm  
—Unheralded, and oft misunderstood—  
Wisdom contents itself with patient waiting:  
Resting its fate with perpetuity.*

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xxxv. *H O P E*

*Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!  
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,  
And tints tomorrow with prophetic ray.*

BYRON

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XXXVI. J A Z Z

*Trombones and ukuleles,  
Flutes, drums, a broken pan;  
A yell, a scream, a ghastly shout . . .  
Yes, that is Jazz!  
But do not mind it:  
Sunshine follows thunder!*

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XXXVII. *HARMONY*

*By harmony our souls are swayed;  
By harmony the world was made.*

LORD LANDSDOWNE

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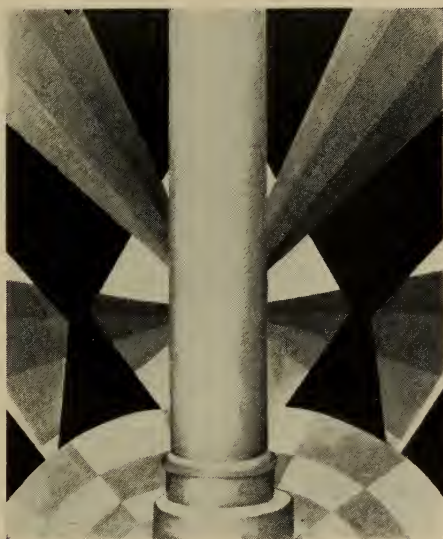
XXXVIII. *INTEGRITY*

*Customs, interests, forms of worship, laws,—all differ. Let a man be true, that is enough.*

VOLTAIRE

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XXXIX. *BIRTH*

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar.*

WORDS WORTH

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XL. *ANGER*

*When most angry and vexed re-  
member that life lasts but a moment  
and that we shall be soon in our graves.*

MARCUS AURELIUS

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XLI. *LOVE*

*Love is a spirit, all compact of fire,  
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.*

SHAKESPEARE

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XLII. *P E A C E*

*Ah! when shall all men's good  
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace  
Be like a shaft of light across the land,  
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea?*

T E N N Y S O N

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XLIII. *SILENCE*

*Like the harmony of the spheres  
that is to be admired and never heard.*

DRYDEN

*It is not mere negation,  
Nor lack for a desire  
To speak one's mind.  
No! Silence is, quite often,  
The quint-essence of wisdom  
And brightly shines amidst the blabber  
Of ever-shrieking fools.*

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XLIV. *SINCERITY*

*He's true to God, who's true to man whatever  
wrong is done,  
To the humblest and the weakest 'neath the all-  
beholding sun.*

J. R. ROWELL

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XLV. SOLITUDE

*O lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,  
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul,  
Who think it solitude to be alone!*

YOUNG

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XLVI. *INJUSTICE*

*The most complete injustice is to  
seem just, when not so.*

PLATO

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XLVII. *TRUTH*

*"It is," says Chadband, "the ray of rays, the sun of suns, the moon of moons, the star of stars. It is the light of Truth."*

DICKENS

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XLVIII. *S U C C E S S*

*A shining, jewelled crown upon your brow,  
Uncounted millions of the nation's coin . .  
If all the fame and glory you could think of  
Were to be yours to do with as you pleased:  
Success could not be yours  
Unless you truly could respect yourself . .  
And had at least one friend willing to swear  
That you were right . . .  
E'en though your purse were empty.*

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XLIX. *VERSATILITY*

*By different methods different men excel,  
But where is he who can do all things well?*

CHURCHILL

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L. GLOOM

*Fancy, who leads the pastimes of the glad,  
Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to throw,  
Sending sad shadows after things not sad,  
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of woe.*

WORDSWORTH

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LI. *C O U R A G E*

*Though all we knew depart,  
The old commandments stand;  
"In courage keep your heart,  
In strength lift up your hand."*

K I P L I N G

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LII. *INHIBITION*

*At night, to his own sharp fancies a prey,  
He lies like a hedgehog rolled up the wrong way,  
Tormenting himself with his prickles.*

HOOD

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LIII. *HIGH TENSION*

*We mostly underrate  
Our mental force and strength,  
And overestimate  
Our sensibilities.  
High Tension, the result,  
Mostly, of careless "fiddling,"  
Must not be tolerated  
To sway our mental poise.*

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LIV. *ASPIRATION*

*O youth whose hope is high,  
Who dost to Truth aspire,  
Whether thou live or die,  
O look not back nor tire.*

ROBERT BRIDGES

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LV. *EXTRAVAGANCE*

*I never could teach the fools of this  
age that the indigent world could be  
clothed out of the trimmings of the  
vain.*

GOLDSMITH

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LVI. *REVELATION*

*To see clearly is poetry, prophecy,  
and religion, all in one.*

RUSKIN

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LVII. *MODESTY*

*Nothing is more modest than greatness; indeed, to be modest is to be great.*

EMERSON

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LVIII. *THE URGE*

*The readiness of doing doth express  
No other but the doer's willingness.*

HERRICK

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LIX. *GARRULITY*

*Such laboured nothings, in so strange a style, . . .  
Amaze the unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.*

POPE

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LX. *PERSEVERANCE*

*The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.*

LONGFELLOW

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LXI. *MEGALOMANIA*

*Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
What though we wade in wealth or soar in fame?  
Earth's highest station ends in "Here he lies,"  
And "dust to dust" concludes the noblest song.*

YOUNG

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LXII. COMPROMISE

*All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter.*

BURKE

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LXIII. *C O N T E N T M E N T*

*I know indeed that wealth is good,  
But lowly roof and simple food,  
With love that hath no doubt,  
Are more than gold without.*

W H I T T I E R

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